

## COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS – OUR COVID SAFE RETURN TO SCHOOL IN 2022

### Rapid Antigen Tests (R.A.T)

As we begin 2022, we are confident that regular surveillance of our community through the use of Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs) will assist in reducing the spread of infection through the presence of COVID-19 at SFX School. We have prepared below, some answers to questions that we have been asked already in the rollout of this process.

### How often should testing take place?

We are asking (based on advice from the Health Department and the State Government) for students to test twice a week prior to coming to school.

### When should the test happen?

The test should take place in the morning, before school at your home.

### On which days should we do the test?

In a “normal” full school week, testing should happen on Monday and Wednesday. If a student is not at school on Monday, testing should happen on the first day of the week that the student is at school and then 2 days later.

At SFX it looks like this:

#### WEEK 1

Year 1 – 6 – Tuesday 1st February and then again on Thursday 3rd February. This should happen before students attend school on that day.

Preps – Wednesday 2nd February and Friday 4th February

#### WEEK 2

All staff and students are to R.A.T test on a Monday and Wednesday morning before attending school.

On **FRIDAY 11TH FEBRUARY**- All students and staff will take home another 5 pack R.A.T test for Week 3 & 4

#### WEEK 3 & 4

All staff and students are to R.A.T test on a Monday and Wednesday morning before attending school

### Why do we only have 5 tests?

The Victorian Government has supplied enough tests for the first 2 weeks of term. We have been told to expect another delivery in Week 3.

### How should we test?

Follow the instructions in the pack. There are several helpful YouTube videos that show how to correctly take a nasal swab by going horizontally in at the bottom of the nostril towards the back, rather than up into the top of the nose towards the brain. <https://www.kidspot.com.au/lifestyle/family-health/ent-surgeon-shows-how-to-properly-swab-your-nose-with-covid-rapid-antigen-test-kit/news-story/0c1bab39ee1248d67c3bdcd17d9b1f03>

### We would prefer a different type of RAT to the ones we have been given?

We have issued families with the tests supplied by the Victorian Government. If you would prefer to use a different type of test that is your family's personal decision. If you cannot obtain an alternative test, please use the tests provided. If you have a supply of alternative tests that you will use, please return the unused, school issued tests to the SFX School Office. It would be our preference that you use the tests provided.

### We are concerned that the testing will be uncomfortable?

Testing can be uncomfortable but if done correctly will not usually be painful. With practice, it becomes easier to tolerate. Discomfort is not a good reason not to test.

### **What should we do if there is a positive result?**

If there is a positive result, the person who is positive must:

- Stay home and isolate for 7 days
- Go onto the Coronavirus website, report the positive result and follow the instructions
- Inform the School via an email to [principal@sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au)

### **Can a student come to school if they test positive but have no symptoms?**

No. A student who tests positive cannot come to school until 7 days of isolation have been completed.

### **As long as a student has a negative result, can they attend school, even if they have mild symptoms?**

No. It is VITAL that no-one comes to school if they have symptoms.

### **What should we do if one sibling has a positive result and others don't?**

Where one sibling within a family tests positive, other siblings and family members who live in the same house will be classed as household contacts. All household contacts must stay home and isolate for 7 days before returning to school.

### **If a student has had COVID-19 in the last 30 days does she still have to test?**

No. If a student has had a confirmed case of COVID-19 and this has been shown on a PCR test or RAT, the child is exempt from testing as they may still be shedding the virus and are likely to return a positive result even though they are not contagious. Please report this past positive result to the School via an email to [principal@sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au). After 30 days from the first positive test, students must commence surveillance testing again. In the event that a student who has previously had COVID-19 exhibits symptoms, they should stay home until symptoms have gone.

### **How can we be sure that other families are testing properly?**

We are trusting that our SFX community will take this process seriously and will do their best to test appropriately.

### **Why aren't students being tested at school so that we know that they have tested and that the process is being done reliably?**

The process of undertaking RATs at home is in line with the Victorian Government recommendations. At this time it is undesirable to put further strain on school staff resources by trying to coordinate RATs for 300 students and 40 staff on site twice a week.

### **Should my child wear a mask?**

It is **mandatory** for students in Year 3 – 6 to wear a mask indoors at all times.

It is **strongly recommended** that Prep to Year 2 students also wear masks indoors.

In 2022 there has been a change and we have been instructed by the Victorian Government to ***“treat any deliberate and persistent non-compliance with the face mask direction as a serious matter”***, unless a student has a lawful medical exemption. Face masks provide a vital protective barrier between staff and students becoming infected with COVID. Keeping staff healthy means that onsite classes and learning will continue unimpeded which is great for every SFX student.

### **I am a parent can I go into the classroom or come onto the school yard at the moment?**

No unfortunately. We are treading really carefully at the moment. Parents may come directly to the school office to collect sick children, pay school fees, drop things off for their child etc. They must wear a face mask, QR Code in and be double vaccinated.

### **I have further questions, who should I ask?**

Please direct all questions to Philip Cachia, Principal on 9435 8474. He will do his best to give you a definitive answer, and when he does not know, he will ask the question of our MACS COVID Officer for clarification.

Philip Cachia (Principal) 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022.